

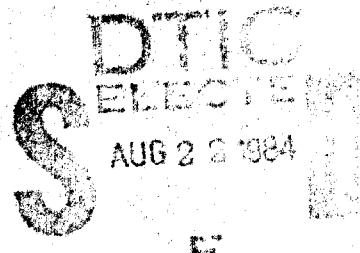
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FAMILY FACTORS CRITICAL TO RETENTION OF NAVAL PERSONNEL

THE LINK BETWEEN RETENTION INTENTION AND RETENTION BEHAVIOR

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FAMILY FACTORS CRITICAL TO THE RETENTION OF NAVAL PERSONNEL

The Link Between Retention Intention and Retention Behavior

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FOREWORD

This report summarizes the third research effort in a series of studies that began in 1979. The studies were:

- o A Roadmap for Navy Family Research
- o Family Factors Critical to the Retention of Naval Personnel
- o A Follow-On Study of Family Factors Critical to the Retention of Naval Personnel.

The Roadmap study described an integrated set of research questions that could be answered through various methodological means. As such, it was a seminal work because it reflected the research priorities of the Navy in a way that organized apparently disparate issues into a complex but whole and understandable fabric.

The Family Factors Study was a direct result of the Roadmap in that it investigated what was at the time the most important Navy family issue: how to retain qualified Navy personnel with families. The chief variable of interest was the stated retention intent of these Navy personnel. The Follow-On study determined the retention behavior of the Navy personnel involved in the preceding investigation. The present report emphasizes the relationship between the retention intention and the retention behavior. It builds on the findings of the previous works.

This study and the one before it represent a body of work that examines the retention decision of Navy personnel with families in great detail. Taken together, the results constitute over 400 pages of text and tabular material. But it is essential to look beyond the words and statistics and realize that they relate the responses of real people with real needs and desires. It is for them that this research was conducted; it is to them that this research is dedicated.

In the same vain, it is hoped that these studies taken in concert will have a positive impact on Navy policy and on the lives of Navy men and women. In responding to the questionnaire and sharing with researchers what was important to them, Navy men and women have given a great deal. We hope they get something back in return.

INTRODUCTION

The retention of qualified personnel within the military is an issue of national concern. It has been the subject of Congressional hearings and public debate and has been designated a priority by the Chief of Naval Operations. The Navy, as well as other branches of the Armed Services, has encountered difficulties in retaining adequate numbers of qualified personnel. These difficulties extend beyond first term service members, where re-enlistment rates are traditionally low, to include second term and mid-career officers and NCO's. The costs of recruiting and training replacement personnel at this more advanced level are very high in terms of fiscal expenditures and readiness for battle.

Concomitant with the rising concern over retention, the Navy has been increasingly concerned about the effects of recent trends in the structure of the family. The Navy family has traditionally been faced with certain unique problems related to the Navy's mission. Frequent relocations, family separations due to deployment and temporary duty assignments, and social and cultural isolation have traditionally placed strains on Navy family life. The dramatic rise in the number of married individuals in the Navy coupled with societal trends have served to focus attention on the quality of Navy family life and its potential implications for the Navy's ability to retain personnel.

How do the unique characteristics of the Navy job affect the retention decision? How do they affect the family? What effect does the family have on the retention decision? To address these questions, Navy officers and enlisted personnel were asked to respond to a number of survey questions about individual characteristics, family factors, job factors, and Navy factors.

Only Naval personnel who had primary dependents, and who had to make a retention division within the next 6 months to a year were surveyed. At the time of the survey (in 1981), about 4,800 Naval personnel met these criteria, and they were selected to participate in the survey. Close to 1600 individuals responded (approximately one-fourth were officers and three-fourths were enlisted personnel). A key question in the survey was the retention intent of these officers and enlisted personnel. In 1983, the subsequent retention behavior was determined for both those who had responded and those who had not by examining official Navy records.

The information in this report is based upon the perceptions of Naval personnel prior to acting on their retention decision. It is presented from the vantage point of the retention behavior which followed: either staying in the Navy or leaving the Navy. Before turning to the differences between those who stayed and those who left, the match between the retention intention and retention behavior is examined. To what extent can behavior be predicted from intention? Comparing those who intended to stay to those who intended to leave or were undecided, which group was more likely to change their minds? These questions are addressed next.

INTENTION AND BEHAVIOR

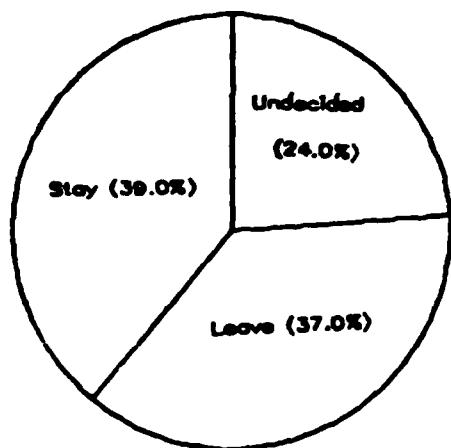
- o Intention and Behavior**
- o Intention**
- o Behavior**
- o Incentives to Change**
- o Predicting Behavior**

Intention and Behavior

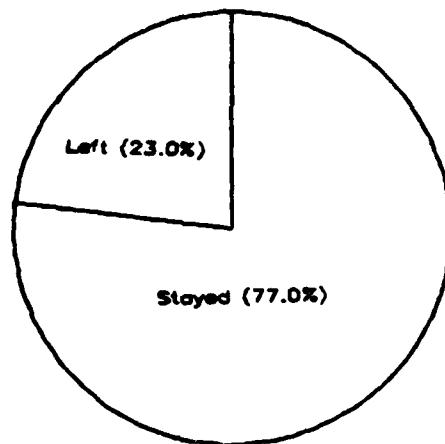
At the time they were surveyed, three-fourths of those who responded expressed a clear retention intent. The other one-fourth was undecided. Comparing officers and enlisted personnel, more officers were undecided (one-third vs. one-fifth of the enlisted personnel). Relatively fewer officers intended to stay (33% vs. 42%). Overall, 37% intended to leave -- 33% of the officers and 38% of the enlisted personnel.

In total, more than three-fourths actually stayed. Comparatively more officers stayed. Only 17% of the officers left, compared to 26% of the enlisted personnel.

RETENTION INTENTION



RETENTION BEHAVIOR



FINDING: MANY MORE STAYED THAN HAD INTENDED TO DO SO.

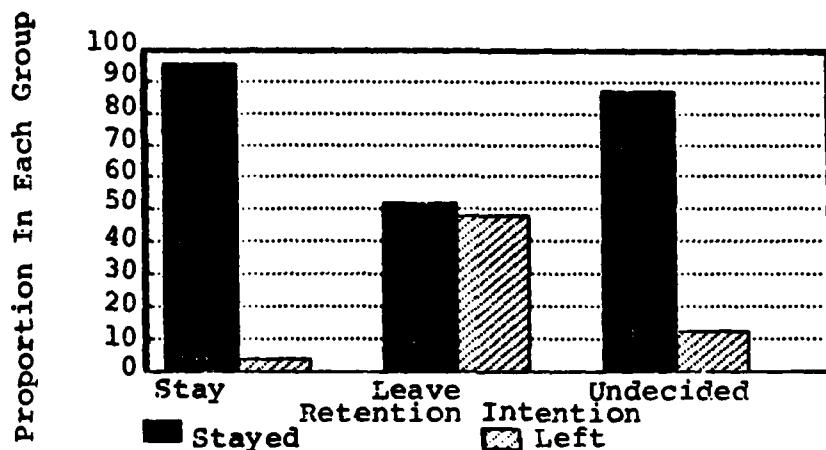
Intention

As would be expected, a number of people changed their decision between the time of the survey and the time that their enlistment ended. Re-examining intention from the perspective of the subsequent behavior, which intention group was more likely to change? What was the trend for the undecided group?

Those intending to stay were highly concordant (96% did stay), and those intending to leave were highly discordant (only 48% left). The proportion of concordant stayers was virtually identical for officers and enlisted personnel (98% and 96%, respectively). However, for those who intended to leave, the proportion discordant within the officer group was higher; 58% of those officers intending to leave stayed, compared to 44% of the enlisted personnel.

Those with a clear intent had formed their decision well in advance of their re-enlistment date. For most, the decision was formulated 16-21 months before their current commitment ended. It would appear that any incentives to reinforce or change this decision should be introduced well in advance of the end of term.

RETENTION BEHAVIOR WITHIN EACH INTENTION GROUP



FINDINGS: THOSE INTENDING TO LEAVE WERE MOST LIKELY TO CHANGE THEIR MINDS, AND THOSE WHO WERE UNDECIDED TENDED TO STAY.

Behavior

Only two decisions were possible -- staying or leaving. These two behavior groups each contain three intention groups: those who matched their original intention, either to stay or to leave; those who changed their original intention: intending to stay they left, or intending to leave they stayed; and those who had been undecided. As is discussed later, those that changed their minds differ from individuals in the "pure" or concordant groups on a number of other factors as well.

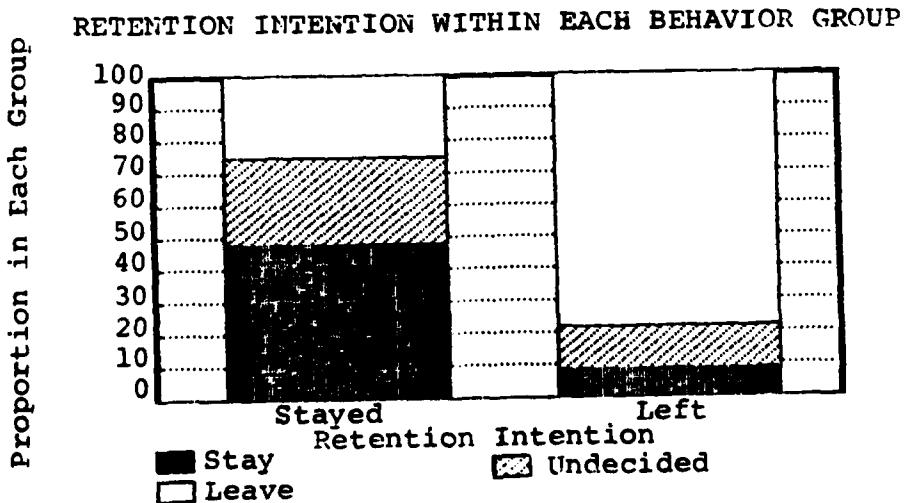
The intention composition of the group that actually stayed was:

- One-half (48%) had intended to stay
- One-fourth (25%) had intended to leave
- One-fourth (27%) had been undecided.

For the group that left, on the other hand, the intention composition was:

- Eight-tenths (78%) had intended to leave
- One-tenth (9%) had intended to stay
- One-tenth (13%) had been undecided.

This pattern is essentially the same for officers and enlisted personnel, with the exception of the intention composition of those who stayed. Less than half of the officers that stayed had intended to do so. Relatively more of those officers who stayed came from the undecided group.



FINDINGS: MOST OF THOSE THAT LEFT HAD INTENDED TO DO SO. FOR THE GROUP THAT STAYED, ALMOST HALF HAD NOT INDICATED THIS AS THEIR ORIGINAL INTENTION.

Incentives to Change

This study was begun in October 1980, and the survey response cut-off date was September 15, 1981. The study was initiated during a time when retention of married mid-career Navy personnel was perceived to be a severe problem. After the survey data were collected, a number of events occurred to change both the military and civilian environments:

- The civilian economy went into a recession with high interest rates and high unemployment.
- Military personnel received an across-the-board pay increase in October of 1982.
- Culturally, military life as a career choice was becoming more acceptable to greater numbers of people. This trend had begun after the Viet Nam war was ended, and it continues to the present day.

With civilian opportunities diminished, with increased pay available, and with the increased acceptance of the military as a career choice, it is not surprising that people entered the military in record numbers. Enlistments in all military branches were up to such an extent that, for the first time in many years, people were turned down for enlistment because quotas had been filled.

Given these events, in addition to the fragility of any intention-behavior linkage with the passage of time, it is not surprising to find that when the time came to act, some of the respondents changed their minds (most in the direction of staying), and that the majority of the undecided group also stayed. What is surprising is the large proportion that did not change their minds. For those with a clear intent at the time of the survey (that is, excluding those that were undecided), three-fourths subsequently acted in accord with this intent. Fewer enlisted personnel changed their minds: 23% of the enlisted personnel, compared to 30% of the officers, reversed their decisions.

FINDINGS: OF THOSE WITH A CLEAR RETENTION INTENT, ONLY ONE-FOURTH CHANGED THEIR MINDS.

Predicting Behavior

The retention decision was examined in a number of ways in this study. One of the focal points of the study was a path analysis. Path analysis determines how multiple factors are interrelated, how they lead to one another. The path analysis conducted examined the relationships among those factors that led to the retention behavior of either staying in the Navy or leaving the Navy. It demonstrated the interconnectedness of multiple factors in the retention decision.

The path analysis identified a number of factors which indirectly affected retention. They were: opinion of the spouse, years of service, and satisfaction with family separation. However, there was only one factor which had a direct effect on retention behavior -- retention intent.

A primary objective of this study was to explain the retention decision: what factors are associated with staying vs leaving? However, an additional perspective was that of attempting to predict behavior, identifying those factors, that if known, would serve to discriminate between those staying and leaving. For this purpose, two discriminant analyses were performed: one which included retention intent, and one which did not.

Here again, a number of factors were important. However, the single greatest discriminating factor proved to be retention intent. The composite of other discriminating factors resulted in an accurate prediction 66% of the time. When retention intent was added, correct prediction was possible 73% of the time.

FINDING: RETENTION INTENT IS A POWERFUL PREDICTOR OF RETENTION BEHAVIOR.

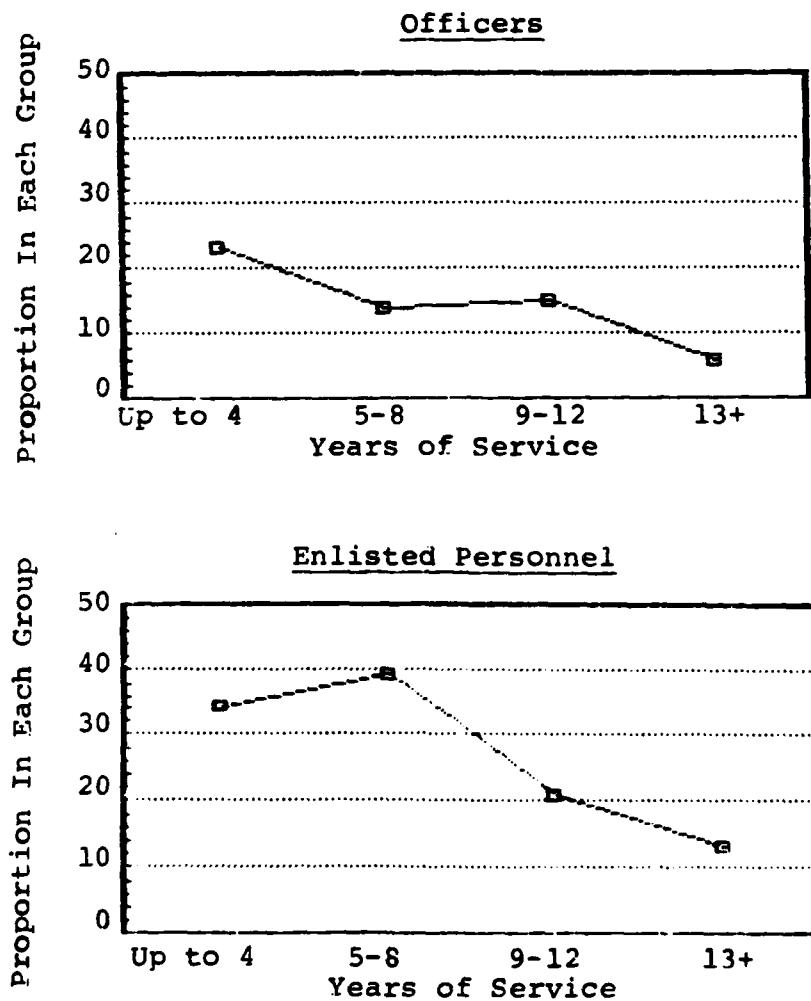
JOB FACTORS

- o Years of Service
- o Pay Grade
- o CREO Categories
- o Job Satisfaction
- o Social Support

Years of Service

The trend is for a higher retention rate with years of service. For enlisted personnel, there is an apparent anomaly in this pattern: those with 5-8 years of service were more likely to leave than any other group, including those with 4 years of service or less. However, this is due to the fact that many first terms of enlistment are for six years.

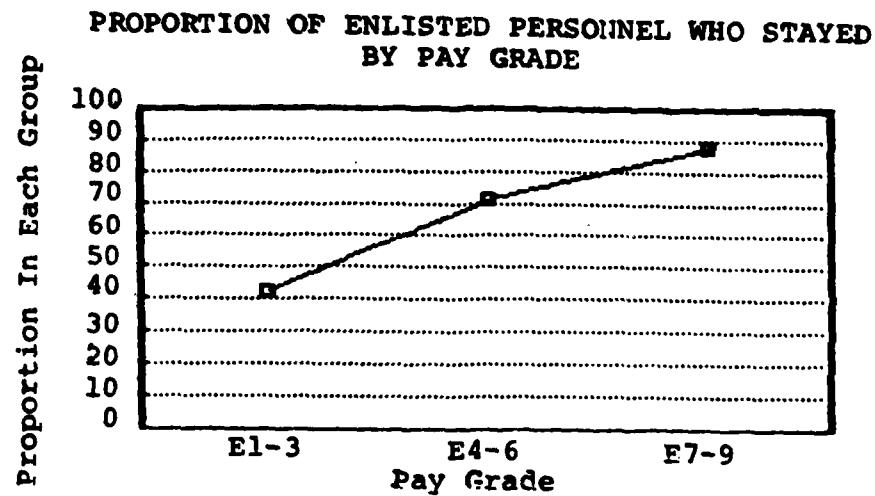
PROPORTION WHO LEFT BY YEARS OF SERVICE



FINDING: ENLISTED PERSONNEL ARE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TO LEAVING THE NAVY WITHIN THE FIRST 5-8 YEARS OF SERVICE.

Pay Grade

Salary is an important factor in any job relationship. For enlisted personnel, pay grade was tracked by the proportion staying and leaving in each pay grade group; that is, in pay grades E1-E3, E4-E6, and E7-E9. There is a predictable progression in the retention rates by pay grade.

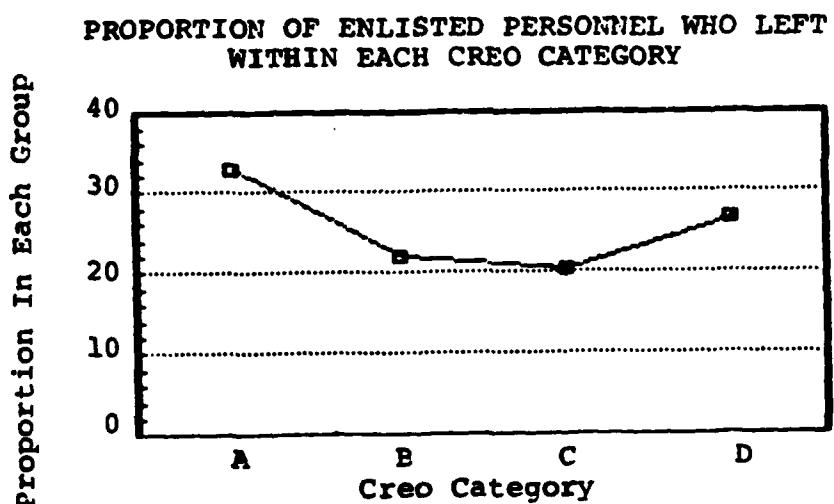


FINDING: HIGHER PAY GRADE WAS ASSOCIATED WITH INCREASED RETENTION.

CREO Categories

CREO categories represent the degree of importance of particular Navy jobs as a function of need and the availability of enlisted personnel with applicable skills. The CREO categories descend in importance from Category A to Category E. (Category E is omitted in the following graph because there were so few in this category.) There are financial incentives available for retaining individuals in the categories of greater need.

Within Category A, 33% left. The proportion leaving in Categories B through D were lower, ranging from 21% to 27%. Based upon the losses in Category A, it would appear that the financial incentives to retain personnel in higher level categories are not working as well as might be hoped.



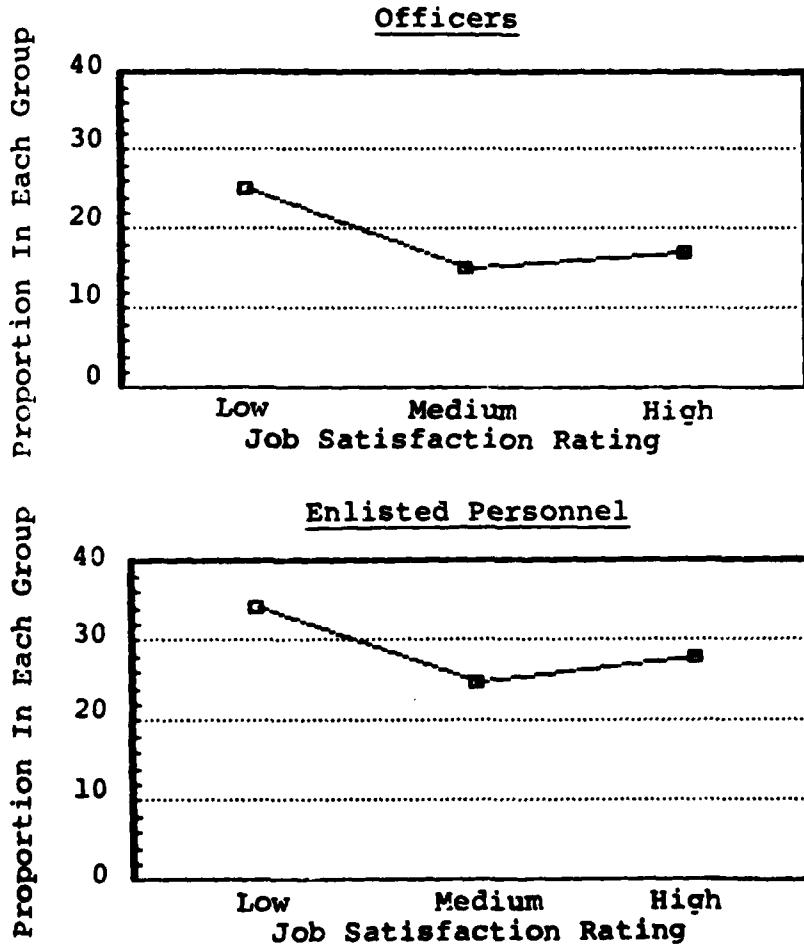
FINDING: THE NAVY LOST PROPORTIONATELY MORE ENLISTED PERSONNEL IN THE HIGHEST CREO CATEGORY.

Job Satisfaction

There were a number of questions asked about job satisfaction. They involved questions about personal satisfaction with the job, co-worker satisfaction, and career satisfaction. In all, nine questions were used to form a composite job satisfaction scale. The ratings given to these questions were combined into categories which represented low job satisfaction, medium job satisfaction, and high job satisfaction.

Those staying and those leaving did differ by the ratings given to job satisfaction. The proportion leaving within each of the job satisfaction categories ranged from a high of 25% leaving for officers and 34% for enlisted personnel, to a low of 15% and 25% for officers and enlisted personnel, respectively. In each case, comparably more left in the group that indicated low job satisfaction.

PROPORTION WHO LEFT BY JOB SATISFACTION RATINGS



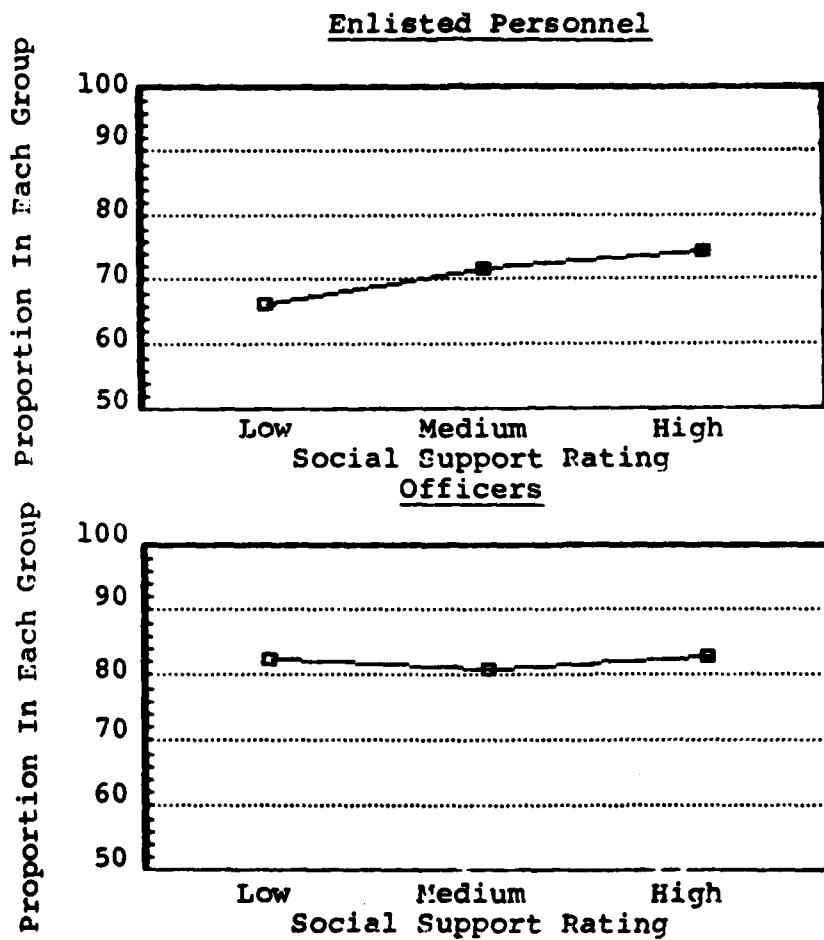
FINDING: PERSONS LEAVING THE NAVY WERE LESS SATISFIED WITH THEIR JOBS THAN THOSE WHO STAYED.

Social Support

A set of questions was also asked about social support. These dealt with the helpfulness of supervisors and co-workers, and the extent to which supervisors and co-workers played a supportive role when there were personal or family problems. As was the case with job satisfaction, responses to these questions were combined and put into the composite categories of low, medium, or high social support.

Responses to the social support scale did not differentiate between officers who stayed and officers who left. There was virtually no difference in the proportion who stayed in each of the social support categories; it only ranged between 81 and 83%. In contrast, degree of social support did make a difference for enlisted personnel. Here the proportion staying ranged from 66% of those in the low social support category to 74% in the high social support category.

PROPORTION WHO STAYED AND DEGREE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT



FINDING: FOR ENLISTED PERSONNEL, HIGHER SOCIAL SUPPORT WAS ASSOCIATED WITH STAYING.

NAVY LIFE AND FAMILY FACTORS

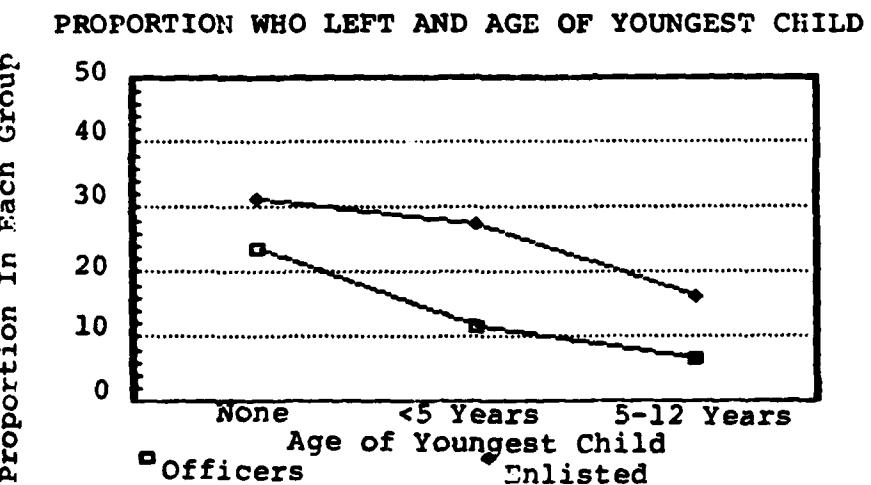
- o Family Composition
- o Family Separation
- o Spouse Influence
- o Family/Navy Satisfaction

Family Composition

The number and kind of dependents (spouse, children, or other dependents), as well as the specific ages of children, determine the composition of the family. One perspective for examining stages of family development is the idea of the family life cycle. This approach focuses on the age of the youngest child as the major factor. Rather than number of children, the life cycle variable emphasizes the degree of children's dependency on their parents as a representation of the maturity of the family. In this sense, the measure represents stages in family life from the extreme dependency of the pre-school child to the "empty nest" condition, where children are no longer living with their parents.

The family life cycle categories used were: no children, youngest child under 5 years, youngest child 5-12 years old, and youngest child 13 years old or more. The last category is omitted in the graph below because there were so few families in this category. The proportion of officers and enlisted personnel leaving does differ by life cycle category. The pattern of difference is the same for both officers and enlisted personnel.

Two aspects play an important role: the presence of dependent children, and the age of the youngest child. Increased responsibility, in the form of dependent children, appears to decrease the likelihood of leaving the Navy. However, for those with dependent children, those with very young children (under 5) are comparatively more likely to leave than those with children between 5 and 12.



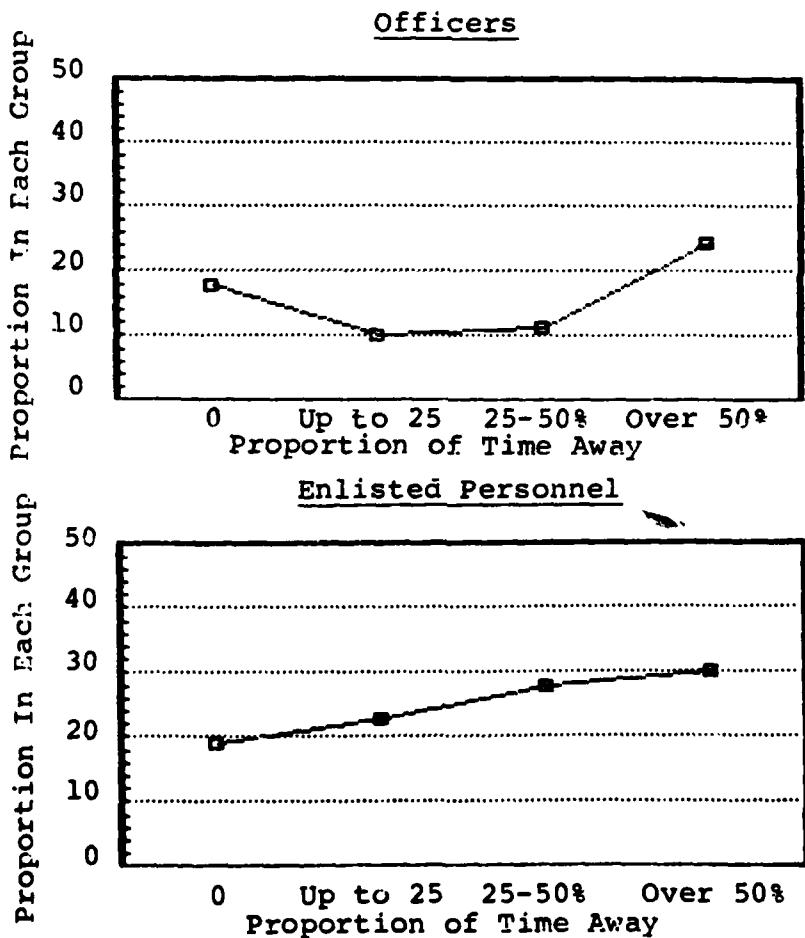
FINDINGS: THOSE WITHOUT CHILDREN WERE MORE LIKELY TO LEAVE. THOSE WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE UNDER 5 WERE MORE LIKELY TO LEAVE THAN THOSE WHOSE YOUNGEST CHILD WAS 5-12 YEARS OLD.

Family Separation

Family separation places a great deal of stress on Navy families. Separation results primarily from TADs (Temporary Duty Assignments) and from deployment. While both represent forms of travel while on military duty, TADs are for relatively shorter periods. Deployments may extend for 6 months or longer.

The survey respondents were asked to estimate the amount of time that they spent away from their families: hardly any, up to 25% of the time, 25-50% of the time, or over 50% of the time. Time spent away from the family did make a difference in the proportions of Navy officers and enlisted personnel who left. For enlisted personnel, for example, when time away from the family was over 50%, the proportion who left reached 30%. This proportion declined to 19% of enlisted personnel who had experienced little or no family separation.

PROPORTION WHO LEFT AND EXTENT OF TIME SPENT AWAY FROM FAMILY



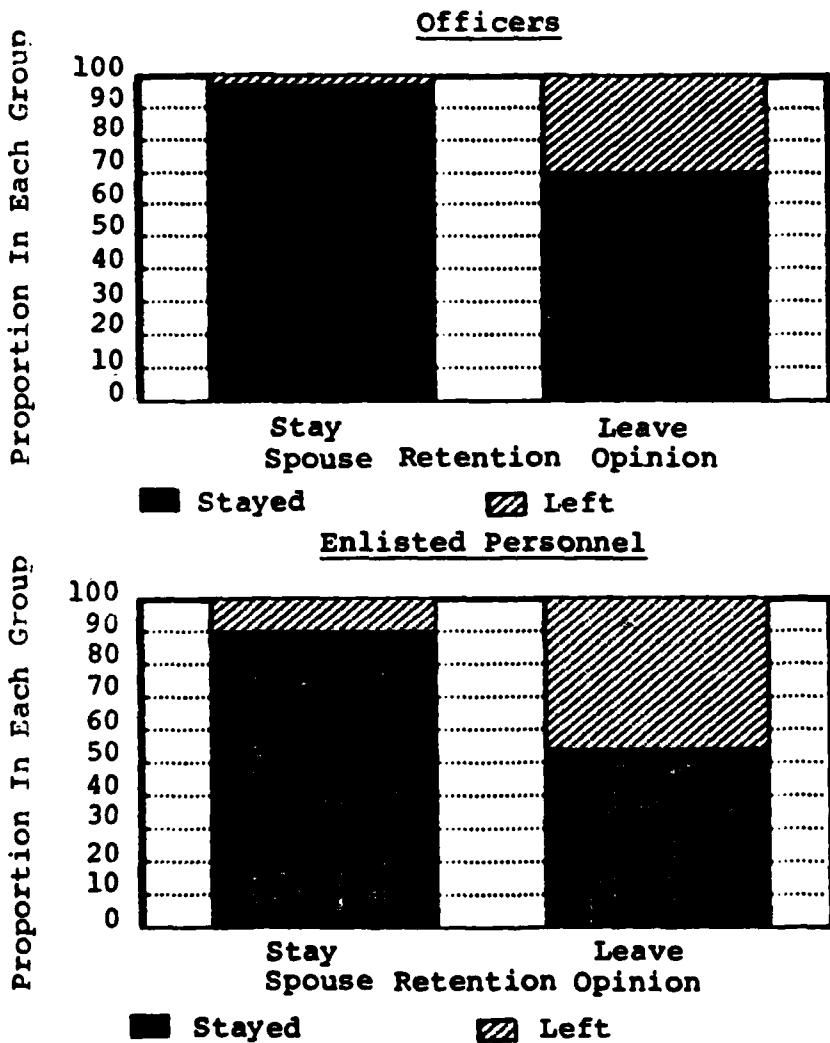
FINDING: THE PROPORTION WHO LEFT INCREASED AS THE PROPORTION OF TIME SPENT AWAY FROM THE FAMILY INCREASED.

Spouse Influence

The survey respondents were asked to indicate the importance of their spouse's opinion and whether or not the spouse wanted them to stay in the Navy. The spouse's opinion was considered to be important by both stayers and leavers. There was a striking difference, however, between those who stayed and those who left and the retention preference of the spouse.

Upwards of ninety-percent of those spouses supporting retention had spouses who did in fact stay in the Navy. Conversely, for spouses preferring separation from the Navy, the proportion who had spouses staying was lower. In the case of officers, 71% stayed; for enlisted personnel, only 55% stayed.

RETENTION OPINION OF SPOUSE AND RETENTION BEHAVIOR



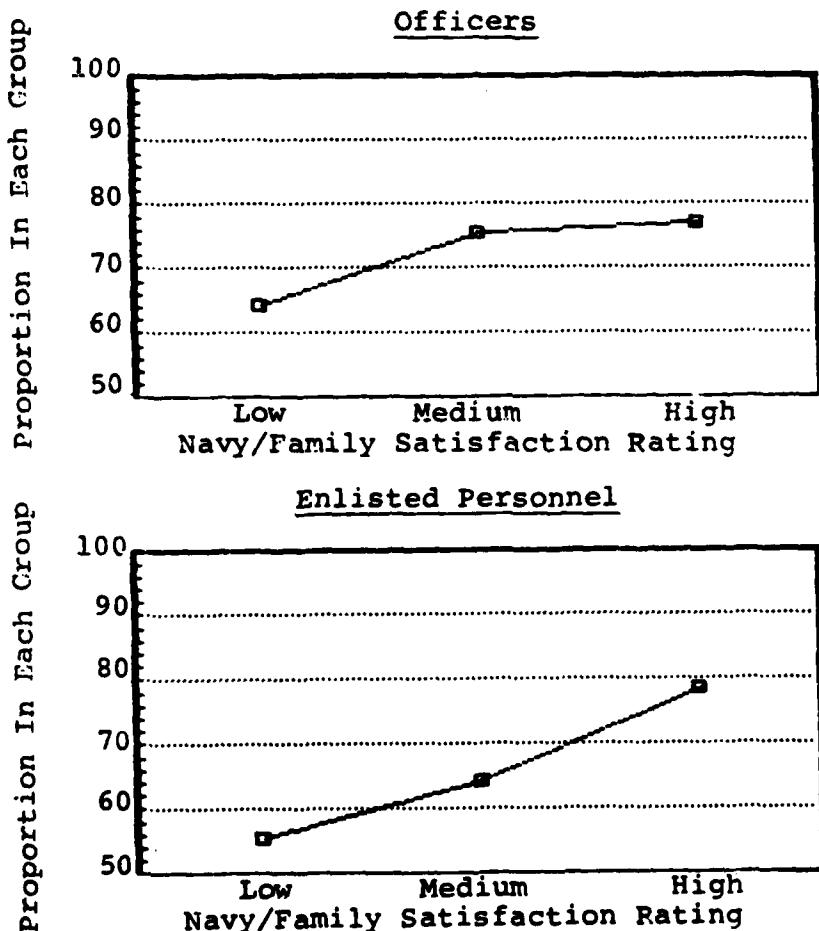
FINDING: THERE WAS A POSITIVE LINK BETWEEN THOSE WHO STAYED AND THE RETENTION PREFERENCE OF THE SPOUSE.

Family/Navy Satisfaction

The relationship between the Navy job and family factors is clear from the preceding questions that dealt with separation and spouse opinion. In addition, a more direct set of questions was asked to gauge these interactions as they pertain to retention. This set of questions addressed Navy treatment of the family, family/Navy conflicts, and spousal support of the Navy career. Rating responses were combined in a composite scale, divided into three categories: low family/Navy satisfaction, medium family/Navy satisfaction, and high family/Navy satisfaction.

The proportion who stayed in each of these categories differed. For officers, the proportion staying ranges from 65% to 77%; for enlisted personnel, from 56% to 78%. Degree of family/Navy satisfaction made a difference in retention rates.

PROPORTION WHO STAYED AND DEGREE OF NAVY/FAMILY SATISFACTION



FINDING: THOSE ABLE TO HANDLE CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE NAVY JOB AND FAMILY DEMANDS WERE MORE LIKELY TO STAY.

FACTORS IMPORTANT FOR STAYING AND LEAVING

Included in the survey were 45 factors that might be important to the retention decision: important for staying or important for leaving. These were rated in descending order of their importance for staying on a scale of 1 to 3, as a 4 if the factor was not considered important to the retention decision, or in ascending order of importance for leaving on a scale of 5 to 7. The following tabulations present group means for the ten factors rated highest by each Naval personnel and retention behavior group: that is, officers who stayed, enlisted personnel who stayed, officers who left, and enlisted personnel who left. In each table, the rating given by the opposite retention behavior group (for example, those who left are paired with those who stayed) is also presented.

Factors Rated Highest by Officers Who Stayed

| | <u>Stayed</u> | <u>Left</u> |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Challenge of Navy Job | 2.7 | 3.8 |
| Satisfaction with Navy Job | 2.9 | 4.4 |
| Use of Personal Skills in Job | 3.0 | 4.5 |
| Promises of Assignment | 3.1 | 4.3 |
| Cost of Medical Care | 3.2 | 3.5 |
| Spouse's Attitude Toward Navy | 3.2 | 4.9 |
| Promises of Training | 3.3 | 3.9 |
| Coworker Support | 3.3 | 3.8 |
| Choice of Assignment | 3.3 | 4.2 |
| Support from Relatives | 3.5 | 3.9 |

Factors Rated Highest by Enlisted Personnel Who Stayed

| | <u>Stayed</u> | <u>Left</u> |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Choice of Assignment | 2.9 | 4.1 |
| Satisfaction with Navy Job | 2.9 | 4.4 |
| Use of Personal Skills in Job | 3.0 | 4.1 |
| Challenge of Navy Job | 3.0 | 4.0 |
| Promises of Assignment | 3.0 | 4.3 |
| Cost of Medical Care | 3.0 | 3.9 |
| Spouse's Attitude Toward Navy | 3.1 | 4.6 |
| Availability of Medical Care | 3.3 | 4.3 |
| Financial Benefits | 3.3 | 4.5 |
| Promises of Training | 3.5 | 4.4 |

Factors Rated Highest by Offices Who Left

| | <u>Left</u> | <u>Stayed</u> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Family Separations due to Deployments | 5.9 | 5.3 |
| Overall Time Spent with Family | 5.9 | 4.9 |
| Civilian Job Opportunities | 5.7 | 4.6 |
| Civilian Job Benefits | 5.6 | 4.6 |
| Spouse's Attitude Toward Navy | 4.9 | 3.2 |
| Frequency of PCS Moves | 4.9 | 4.3 |
| PCS Moves | 4.9 | 4.3 |
| Total Family Income | 4.8 | 3.7 |
| Family Separations (TAD's, etc) | 4.7 | 4.5 |
| Stress from PCS Moves | 4.6 | 4.4 |

Factors Considered Important by Enlisted Personnel Who Left

| | <u>Left</u> | <u>Stayed</u> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Overall time Spent With Family | 5.8 | 4.3 |
| Family Separations due to Deployments | 5.7 | 4.8 |
| Civilian Job Opportunities | 5.6 | 4.1 |
| Civilian Job Benefits | 5.6 | 4.1 |
| Total Family Income | 5.4 | 3.7 |
| Family Separations (TAD's, etc.) | 5.1 | 4.4 |
| Other Navy Rules | 4.9 | 3.9 |
| PCS Moves | 4.7 | 4.1 |
| Quality of Medical Care | 4.6 | 3.6 |
| Spouse's Attitude Toward Navy | 4.6 | 3.1 |

For those who stayed, job related factors were considered to be an incentive for staying, as was spouse's attitude toward the Navy. For those who stayed, the civilian alternative tended to be only moderately attractive.

For those who left, family separation factors and spouse's attitude tended to be rated as important factors for leaving. The civilian alternative was considered to be attractive, and the Navy job factors were given more neutral ratings.

FINDING: ONLY ONE FACTOR APPEARS IN COMMON AS IMPORTANT FOR BOTH STAYING AND LEAVING: SPOUSE'S ATTITUDE.

CONCORDANT AND DISCORDANT GROUPS

The earlier section on behavior mentions the fact that the discordant intention-behavior groups differ from the concordant intention-behavior groups in a number of ways. The tendency is for the ratings of those who were undecided but stayed to fall between the concordant stay and leave groups, closer to the concordant stay group. For those that stayed despite an intention to leave, the rating pattern is closest to that of the concordant leave group. (Those that were undecided and left, as well as those that intended to stay but left, were too few in number to analyze)

Two examples of these patterns are presented below. Behavior is segmented by intention for the ratings given to spouse's attitude toward the Navy, and to job satisfaction. The trends illustrated here are consistent for most of the rating questions asked.

SPOUSE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD NAVY

| <u>Intention-Behavior</u> | <u>Mean Ratings for Officers</u> | <u>Mean Ratings for Enlisted Personnel</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Stay-Stay | 2.5 | 2.3 |
| Undecided-Stay | 3.0 | 2.9 |
| Leave-Stay | 4.9 | 4.9 |
| Leave-Leave | 5.3 | 5.1 |

PROPORTION WITHIN EACH GROUP RATING JOB SATISFACTION AS LOW

| <u>Intention-Behavior</u> | <u>Officers</u> | <u>Enlisted Personnel</u> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Stay-Stay | 10% | 20% |
| Undecided-Stay | 14% | 33% |
| Leave-Stay | 43% | 44% |
| Leave-Leave | 37% | 42% |

FINDING: THE RATING PATTERN FOR THOSE WHO WERE UNDECIDED BUT STAYED IS CLOSEST TO THAT OF THE CONCORDANT STAYERS. THE RATING PATTERN FOR THOSE WHO INTENDED TO LEAVE BUT STAYED IS CLOSEST TO THAT OF THE CONCORDANT LEAVERS.

IMPLICATIONS

The initial purpose of this study was to examine those factors critical to the retention of married personnel. Implicit in the survey design and analysis was an assumed interconnectedness among three spheres: family, work, and Navy life. That assumption has been supported. A second purpose was to examine the relationship between the retention intention and the retention behavior. The strength of that relationship has also been demonstrated.

Intention and Behavior

Based upon the intention-behavior experiences of this study, it appears that:

- Virtually all Navy officers and enlisted personnel with the intention to stay will stay.
- Most of those who are undecided will stay.
- A substantial number of those intending to leave will change their minds.
- Almost all who do leave will have had that intention well before the deadline for re-enlistment.

Nevertheless, retention intent is the most parsimonious predictor of retention behavior.

Family Factors

Spouse opinion and the impact of the Navy job on the family are critical to the retention decision. Most aspects of work and Navy life are also family variables. Navy life impinges on family life. The family of a military person has as much an identity with the Navy as that person does. The family's complex fabric of personal commitment and interpersonal sharing is embedded in Navy life to the same extent as a single person's commitment to the Navy, perhaps even more so.

The family's fortune and misfortunes are married together; to the extent that the Navy can enhance family/Navy life, it can increase the retention of married personnel. To the extent that the Navy can respond to the needs of families, the quality and quantity of personnel wanting to stay is likely to increase.

METHODOLOGY

The vehicle for data collection was a lengthy and comprehensive questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 326 items classified into a number of categories:

- Demographic items
- Household, marriage, and family
- Housing and housing expenses
- Transportation
- Job and work conditions
- Financial information
- Social support
- Family separation
- Satisfaction with Navy life and services
- Factors associated with the retention decision
- Improvements in aspects of Navy life and services

The substantive areas included in the questionnaire were varied enough to capture the breadth of the Navy/family experience, while each area was covered in sufficient detail to assure capturing the depth of that experience. Each major section frequently included objective or factual items (e.g., number of hours worked in the Navy job) as well as attitudinal items which elicited an opinion on the part of the respondent.

Follow-up information on retention behavior was extracted from two sets of Navy files: the Enlisted Personnel System Tracking File, and the Officer Attrition File.

Survey Sample - There were 1016 officers and 3802 enlisted personnel in the target sample, for a total number of 4818 individuals. The target sample was overwhelmingly male and predominately white, with blacks comprising close to 12% of the enlisted personnel and 4% of the officers. There was a sizeable proportion of persons in other racial categories.

The demographic composition of those who responded was compared to the target sample. There was a differential response rate by sex and race. However, the respondent sample did not deviate markedly from the target sample except for the response rate of blacks. Blacks are under-represented by about half in the respondent sample.

Companion Reports - There are two other reports about this study:

Westinghouse Public Applied Systems, "Family Factors Critical to the Retention of Naval Personnel: Final Report," submitted to the Navy Personnel Research and Development Center, August, 1982; and Westinghouse Public Applied Systems, "Follow-On Study of Family Factors Critical to the Retention of Naval Personnel," submitted to the Office of Naval Research, February 14, 1984.

These reports contain further detail on the information in this report, including tests of significance for the variables which differentiate between those who stayed and those who left. The survey questionnaire is also appended to these companion reports.

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